

1.913  
H3T72  
Reserve

United States Department of Agriculture  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
Washington, D. C.

MAY 14 1940  
✓

TRENDS AND PRACTICES IN HOME MANAGEMENT EXTENSION

PROGRAMS IN CERTAIN STATES\*

By Dorothy F. Simmons  
Extension Assistant in Home Management  
Iowa State College

SUMMARY

Trends in Subject Matter

1. There was a marked trend toward subjects in the area of money management. Selecting electric equipment and family financial planning, included in this group, were the specific subjects of the entire list toward which there was the most apparent trend.
2. The trend toward subjects dealing with the house and yard was second in importance. Kitchen improvement was the most prominent phase in this group.
3. The time and energy management group ranked third. Laundry methods and care of equipment were most prominent in this group.
4. No item of subject matter had been dropped from the program by more than three States. Less than half of the States indicated that any subject matter had been dropped during the last 3 years.
5. Subjects dealing with the house and yard appear to have been enjoyed by the rural women more than subjects in the other groups. Money-management phases ranked second in popularity and time and energy phases, third.
6. Kitchen improvement was rated highest in enjoyment of the specific subject matter by the largest number of States. This is in the group included under the house and yard.
7. Study of laundry methods was the most popular of the subjects in the time-and-energy group.

\*From "Trends and Practices in Home Management Extension Programs in Certain States. II. Evaluation of Programs," by Dorothy F. Simmons. A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty for the degree of master of science. Major subject, home management. Iowa State College, 1939.

USDA  
LIB



8. The subject of legal and business transactions was the most enjoyed of the money-management phases.

9. Subjects most enjoyed by the rural women were not the ones toward which there was the greatest trend.

#### Procedures in Carrying Out The Program

1. About one-third of the counties having extension work for rural women carried on a major home-management project during the years 1936, 1937, and 1938.

2. There was an increase of 40 percent in the number of counties having a minor project; there were only slight increases in the counties carrying a major home-management project and the counties having any home-economics extension work for rural women.

3. The number of lessons constituting a major project in home management varied from an average minimum of 3.3, to an average maximum of 5.3. Minor projects varied only from an average of 1.5 to 2.

4. Time allowed at each meeting for presenting home-management subject matter averaged 3.8 hours at local-leader training schools, and 1.9 hours for local group meetings.

5. Demonstration and discussion were used as methods of teaching in all the States reporting. Only 19 of 24 used result demonstrations.

6. More States reported that the teaching was done by home demonstration agents and local leaders than by specialists. In more than half the States local leaders were trained in home management even in counties where there is no home demonstration agent. Training schools in counties having home demonstration agents, were given by specialists in 19 States and by the agents in 18 States. In about three-fourths of the States, specialists assisted the agents with preparation of each lesson before it was presented.

7. Time for reports, recreation, and music was allowed at home-management training schools for leaders in 18, 14, and 12 States respectively.

8. Home-economics extension departments in all but one of the States reporting were taking part in the outlook program. Home-management specialists took responsibility for the program in about three-fourths of the States. In more than half the States home-management specialists reported they needed more time to devote to outlook work.

9. Home demonstration agents presented outlook information to the rural women in nine-tenths of the States reporting, home-management specialists in two-thirds of the States, and other specialists in half the States. Local leaders were found to be presenting outlook information in about one-third of the States.



10. Field agents were trained for their participation in the outlook program in district meetings in more than half of the States. In about one-third of the States this training was given in connection with the annual extension conference.

11. Home-management specialists in half the States regularly devoted part of their time to house furnishings, and in half the States the specialists assisted with the 4-H Club program.

12. In three-fourths of the States home-management specialists worked cooperatively with specialists in housing, outlook, and county planning.

### Objectives

1. Objectives contributing to household methods that bring satisfying living experiences were listed among the goals of more States than any other, and objectives contributing to strengthening financial stability were next in importance. Northern, Eastern, and Southern States are all in agreement in this regard. In the Western States, however, these two objectives were of equal importance.

2. Among the goals contributing to financial stability, an appreciation of the interrelation of the farm and home business was found more frequently than any of the others.

3. Constructive use of leisure was the objective most commonly included in the group contributing to happy personal relationships.

4. Better housing was listed by the States most often as an objective contributing to promoting health and physical well-being, and reducing time and energy was the most important one contributing to better housekeeping methods.

### Evaluation of Program

1. The major goals that seemed to be most important are those to which the States were giving the most emphasis in the regular project lessons and demonstrations, and in the bulletin materials available for distribution.

2. The contributing objective most frequently indicated by the States under each of the major objectives was often not the one for which the most lesson and bulletin materials were found.

## CONCLUSIONS

### Trends in Subject Matter

1. There is a tendency to rotate subject matter rather than to drop certain phases permanently and to add phases that have never been included before.



2. There seems to be responsiveness to timely needs. Needs in the States as seen by the specialists are given more consideration in building the program than are the likes and dislikes of the women.

#### Procedures in Carrying Out the Program

1. The number of lessons and the amount of time for each lesson seems small when compared with formal classroom teaching but is probably as much as could be used in an informal teaching program.

2. The marked growth in the number of counties carrying on minor projects may indicate increasing opportunity for correlating home-management work with other subject matter.

3. The large percentage using the plan of having local leaders and home demonstration agents do much of the actual teaching would seem to impose some limitations on the type of material presented, and may partly account for the wide spread of subject matter included. This fact may also account for some of the "doing" phases of the subject matter holding their place against "decision-making" phases.

4. The economic outlook program probably would function more effectively if programs could be adjusted so that specialists could devote the amount of time to it that they feel is necessary.

#### Objectives

1. State home-management specialists could profitably clarify their objectives by stating them in terms of interests, ideals, attitudes, and appreciations of the group they are serving. The objectives would then be better guides for program making.

2. Regional differences in objectives are of slight importance.

#### Evaluation of Programs

1. The most emphasis in the programs is being placed on subject matter pointing to the major objectives that seem most important to the workers.

2. The small number of bulletins on money management and interrelation of farm or home business phases is out of line with the prominence given to these phases in the objectives.

#### Further Studies Suggested

Work on the material included in this study suggested to the author the following investigations that would be valuable in this field:

1. A study of the objectives of home-management extension programs, using as criteria a list of needs of rural homemakers compiled from research studies.

2. A study of the work being done in the field of housing in extension programs. This would include study of subject matter used, methods and procedures, and possibly some attempt to measure effectiveness of various subject matter, methods, and procedures.

3. A study of work done in the area of family financial planning conducted in a manner similar to No. 2.

4. A study of techniques adaptable to teaching in the extension program those phases in which help in decision making is the main purpose. This would be a contribution from the fields of education and psychology.



